

Migration, Metascience, and Development Policy in Island Polynesia

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Why should I stay, have I a name that is called?

JUNIOR SON OF SOCIETY ISLANDS CHIEF,
C. FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Surely the main orientation of sociology is not toward restoring the societies that preceded the industrial and democratic revolutions, or even the educational revolution. Rather it has been toward a search for those components of social systems that have accounted for some of the positive features of earlier societies, with a view to understanding how they may be reshaped to meet the functional exigencies of emerging modern societies.

TALCOTT PARSONS, *The System of Modern Societies*

In the world market, the connection of the individual with the whole—but also, and simultaneously the independence of this connection from the individuals—has itself progressed to such a level that its formation already itself embodies the precondition for its becoming something different.

KARL MARX, *The Grundrisse*

Polynesian peoples have never been sedentary, but their migration history has probably been highly discontinuous. Periods of intensive movement have been punctuated by relatively immobile ones. The settlement of the islands of the Polynesian triangle from Southeast Asia was one of the most remarkable cultural and technical feats of prehistory, but it occurred over many centuries and in stages. By the sixteenth century, the period of oceanic voyaging, which forms such an important part of Polynesian

mythology and oral history, had essentially come to a close (Hiroa 1959). The sporadic movement of individual Polynesians and some small groups recommenced under the entirely different conditions of European discovery and political penetration commencing in the eighteenth century; but few of the movements of Polynesians, whether singly or in groups, that occurred before World War II had a significant social or demographic impact on the islands themselves,¹ and by the mid-1940s probably more than 95 percent of all Polynesians were still living in their home islands.

During the past three decades, however, Polynesian population movement has entered a new and extremely intensive phase. With the possible exception of Tuvalu, all the independent states, self-governing territories, or dependencies of island Polynesia have become highly migration oriented. Population movement in these societies is not simply a marginal social activity involving a few innovative individuals seeking upward social or economic mobility, but is an integral part of a broad social and economic transformation in which a large proportion of the population participates—either actively or vicariously.

Aspects of this transformation have attracted the attention of many social scientists over the past few decades, and a considerable body of scientific literature has now built up. In the case of migration, a watershed was reached in the mid-1980s with the publication of the results of two large-scale studies that attempted to summarize and synthesize the conclusions of a large number of research findings and to employ them to guide the formulation and implementation of public policy—particularly with respect to aid and economic development in the islands. One of the most striking aspects of these studies (see Bertram and Watters 1984, 1985, 1986; Connell 1983*b*, 1983*c*, 1983*d*, 1983*e*, 1983*f*, 1987) is that while each reviews a similar range of empirical studies, the conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from them are in large part contradictory.

The contradictory findings of these research studies raise a number of important questions. First, what is it about the social sciences that contributes to disparate conclusions and policy recommendations? Is contradiction an inevitable feature of applied social science, or are these aberrant cases? Second, are the discrepant findings a function of differences in method, in theory, in philosophical premises, or in some other component of scientific thought? Third, is it possible to synthesize the two approaches in the interests of both scientific progress and social progress? The first

two sets of questions are clearly interlocked, since the second can be seen as a case study of the first. An attempt to unravel these two issues can reveal something about the contemporary patterns of international migration in the region and their consequences as well as assist in understanding the problematic relationship between social science and social policy.

A SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC TRANSFORMATION

The countries involved in this transformation—and which are the subject of this article—include American Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, and Western Samoa.² These territories and microstates are now intricately linked by complex migration processes to the Pacific-rim countries of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. The nature and degree of these links vary from case to case. Niueans, Tokelauans, and Cook Islanders live mostly in a bipolar world consisting of the home society and satellite communities in New Zealand, though some of these Islanders have recently moved to Australia. The demographic center of gravity for these groups has now shifted to the metropolitan pole, the island pole taking on the character of the satellite. Samoans and Tongans inhabit a more complex system, in which the home society remains demographically dominant and satellite communities are located in Hawai'i and mainland United States to the north and New Zealand and Australia to the south.

An understanding of the magnitude of the demographic transformation that has brought these migration systems into existence requires a brief statistical excursus. Although the supply of statistics on these migrant streams is uneven, the general outline of origins and destinations and their trends during the past three decades is apparent. The least well-documented stream and the smallest to date is the recently developed one linking island Polynesia with Australia. The Australian data have little time depth since Australian censuses do not collect ethnicity data, and place-of-birth statistics for the Pacific Islands region have only recently been collected. Trends in the flow of Polynesian migrants to the United States from Western Samoa and Tonga are probably reasonably well reflected in Immigration and Naturalization Service statistics on immigrant admissions, but these data omit American Samoans and obviously do not include illegal immigrants or persons overstaying visitor visas. The supply

of stock data from US sources is poor since only Samoans appeared by name on the 1980 US census questionnaire, and prior to that it is necessary to go back to the 1920 census to find any reference to Polynesians other than Hawaiians (Hayes and Levin 1984). Other ethnic groups (Tongans, Cook Islanders, etc) had to write in their identities under the category of "other" in the 1980 census, and this probably resulted in an understatement of their true numbers. New Zealand has the best supply of stock data on Polynesians (both migrants and New Zealand-born), while the supply of flow data has declined since the early 1980s (Bedford 1984).

The data summarized in Table 1 suggest that by the mid-1980s a minimum of 185,500 ethnic Polynesians originating by birth or ancestry from island Polynesia were living in the three metropolitan countries of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. This number represents 37 percent of the combined total of about 500,000 Polynesians living in the home islands and these metropolitan countries. The proportion of persons living outside their ancestral home ranged from 22 percent for Tongans to 78 percent for Niueans. In the case of Samoans—the largest migrant group—36 percent were living outside either Western Samoa or American Samoa. Since the data do not include illegal immigrants or those living outside both the home country and the metropolitan countries shown in the table,³ the actual proportion of expatriate Polynesians was probably closer to 40 percent in the mid-1980s and has most likely continued to rise in the second half of the 1980s.

Figures 1 and 2 give an idea of immigration trends in the major destination countries of the United States and New Zealand, respectively. The effects of the 1965 revision of US immigration laws—which placed greater emphasis on family reunion—are apparent in Figure 1, especially in the case of entries from Tonga. Entries from Western Samoa and Tonga took a sharp downturn around 1980, but while Tongan entries have subsequently climbed, those from Western Samoa have declined to less than 300 per year. Census-based figures for New Zealand (Table 2 and Figure 2) show the steady increase of the Pacific Island Polynesian population since 1956. At an average annual rate of growth of 9.3 percent over three decades, this growth pattern can be appropriately characterized as "explosive." The growth of a "mixed race" population—an important by-product of three decades of immigration—is apparent in the increasing numbers in the "Other Polynesian" category.

Table 1. Selected Polynesian Ethnic Groups by Place of Residence around 1986

Ethnic group	Home country of residence						Metropolitan country of residence				Total	Proportion of total (%)	
	Cook Islands	Niue	Tokelau	Tonga	Samoa	Total Home	Australia	New Zealand	United States	Total Metro		Home	Metro
Cook Islands													
Maori	17,200	—	—	—	—	17,200	1,457	30,087	2,000	33,544	50,744	34	66
Niuean	—	2,900	—	—	—	2,900	—	10,446	—	10,446	13,346	22	78
Tokelauan	—	—	1,600	—	—	1,600	—	2,568	—	2,568	4,168	38	62
Tongan	—	—	—	94,500	—	94,500	4,473	11,691	10,500	26,664	121,164	78	22
Samoan	—	—	—	—	197,100	197,100	2,983	59,859	49,500	112,342	309,442	64	36
TOTAL	17,200	2,900	1,600	94,500	197,100	313,300	8,913	114,651	62,000	185,564	498,864	63	37

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Unpublished Tables, 1986 Census; New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings; US Census Bureau. Island country data from 1986 census reports for respective countries.

Notes: — = not available or not tabulated. Figures for the United States have been estimated on the basis of 1980 census data projected to 1986. Table does not show intra-Pacific movement (eg, Tongans in Niue, etc).

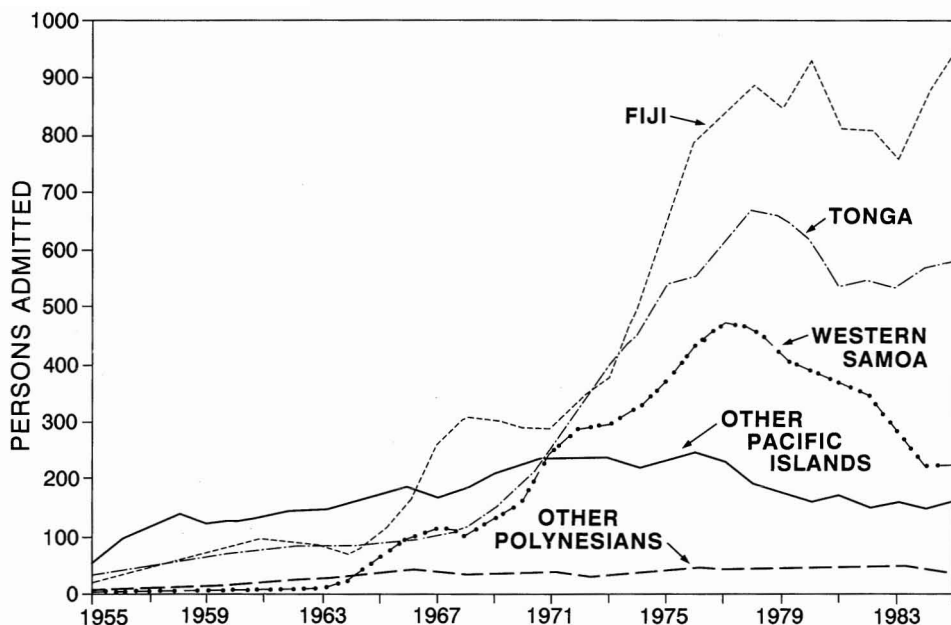


FIGURE 1. Pacific Islander Immigrants Admitted to the United States by Country of Birth, 1955-1985. (In three-year moving averages centered on indicated year.)
Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States Department of Justice.

The preceding statistical picture is based essentially on census data or estimates derived from them. Such data give little indication of the extent of circular, repeat, and return movement. Although it is quite clear that the net flow of Polynesian migration is away from the islands, the gross stream is composed of a complex admixture of migrant types and forms of movement that vary through time and by season. Short-term visitors attending life-cycle events; "working life" migrants intending to return on retirement; school-age children being sent to a metropolitan school for a year or two to upgrade their education (or children with behavior problems being sent back); tertiary-education students going abroad for higher degrees; "target" migrants seeking temporary work to accumulate capital for house construction or vehicle purchase; the elderly seeking medical treatment unavailable in the islands; village entertainment groups visiting migrant communities abroad to raise funds for village projects; and, of course, permanent emigrants "voting with their feet"—all these types of

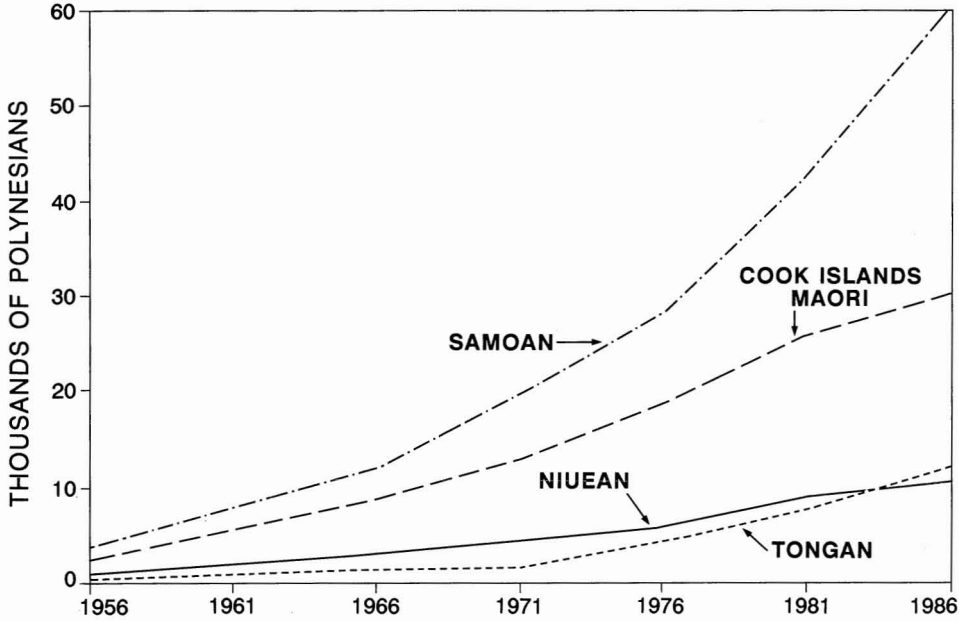


FIGURE 2. Island Polynesians in New Zealand, 1956–1986, by Ethnic Identity.

Source: Table 2.

movement and people moving are represented in varying proportions in the total migration stream.

The flow of people has in turn produced counterflows of money, goods, services, and information. Cash remittances and manufactured products flow from the metropolitan to the island branches of a family; island foodstuffs and crafts move in the reverse direction on a lesser scale. Information about educational or work opportunities in the metropolitan centers flows back to the islands by word of mouth, letter, or telephone; news of important social events at home moves by similar means to the various overseas communities. Much information transfer and other transactions occur during annual visits in both directions, which usually peak during the Christmas holiday season.

In brief, the large net outflows of population from island Polynesia to distant metropolitan centers over the past three decades have apparently not been accompanied by widespread social disintegration. Modern transport and communications have enabled these Polynesian societies to become dispersed in space while still retaining some degree of organic

Table 2. Island Polynesians in New Zealand, 1956-1986

A: POPULATION GROWTH							
Ethnic group	1956	1961	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986
Cook Islands Maori	2,320	5,492	8,663	12,913	18,610	25,587	30,087
Niuean	848	1,847	2,846	4,126	5,688	8,646	10,446
Samoan	3,740	7,791	11,842	19,540	27,876	42,584	59,859
Tokelauan	na	na	na	1,183	1,737	2,295	2,568
Tongan	917	1,153	1,389	1,472	3,980	7,332	11,691
Other Polynesian	na	na	1,531	4,518	7,803	15,064	13,257
TOTAL	7,825	16,283	26,271	43,752	65,694	101,508	127,908
B: AVERAGE ANNUAL INTERCENSAL GROWTH RATES							
	1956-61	1961-66	1966-71	1971-76	1976-81	1981-86	1956-86
Cook Islands Maori	17.2	9.1	8.0	7.3	6.4	3.2	8.5
Niuean	15.6	8.6	7.4	6.4	8.4	3.8	8.4
Samoan	14.7	8.4	10.0	7.1	8.5	6.8	9.2
Tokelauan	—	—	—	7.7	5.6	2.2	5.2*
Tongan	4.6	3.7	1.2	19.9	12.2	9.3	8.5
Other Polynesian	—	—	21.6	10.9	13.2	2.6	10.8†
TOTAL	14.7	9.6	10.2	8.1	8.7	4.6	9.3

Source: New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, indicated years.

Notes: * 1971-1986.

† 1966-1986.

unity at the level of the social system. This has been facilitated in part by the ability of modern Polynesians to maintain dual identities—one adapted to the demands of metropolitan societies (and in particular their labor markets), the other rooted in the neotraditional culture of the home society. The impression, then, is of “transnational” (Loomis 1984) communities consisting of two or more population “nodes” separated by large distances while apparently maintaining similar social relations of rights and obligations as would be operative in a previously geographically bounded system. Thus has emerged in the Pacific a Polynesian version of the “West Atlantic system” (Patterson 1987), which, through flows of people, money, and goods, links a number of Caribbean microstates with the east coast of the United States. The Polynesian sociodemographic system is an important part of the “South Pacific system” described by Bedford (1988) and Hau’ofa (1987), but is more extensive in that it reaches to Hawai’i and California and to several other western states of the United States.

The emergence of such bipolar or complex social systems in Polynesia, along with an accelerating pace of political, social, and economic interactions with Pacific-rim societies and with the global system of societies as a whole, raises significant new questions for the social sciences and poses challenges not only for socioeconomic theory and research methods but also—most important—for those social and economic planners, managers, and administrators who use social science results. A new type of sociodemographic system has emerged in a group of Polynesian societies that traditional macrosociological and economic planning models are rather ill equipped to analyze. Modern social science developed along with the emergence of the system of modern nation states—indeed, its *raison d’être* was the analysis of the integration problems of emerging national societies. Regardless of whether the orientation has been toward a “conflict” or a “consensus” model of society, the assumption that national societies and social systems are geographically bounded has been central to macrosociological analysis of development and change since the foundations of sociology were laid in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. An important exception to this generalization is the Marxist-Leninist theory of imperialism—echoes of which are to be found in current “world-system” theory, to which I shall return.

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As mentioned at the outset, two major policy-oriented social science research projects focused on the development implications of Polynesian migration have recently come to almost opposite research conclusions and policy recommendations. The first, and most comprehensive, study was undertaken jointly by the South Pacific Commission (SPC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), originally at the request of Pacific Island ministers of labor. Among other objectives, the SPC-ILO study was charged with conducting a "policy synthesis" of existing migration studies to determine the impact of both internal and international migration on employment and development in the twenty-two island member countries of the SPC.

As the research phase of the latter project was drawing to a close in late 1983, the New Zealand government commissioned the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) of Victoria University, Wellington, to examine the economies of a number of small Pacific Island countries from the viewpoint of the role of New Zealand's foreign aid in their economic development programs. Although the latter project examined only five countries in detail⁴ compared with twenty-two in the SPC-ILO project, had a more explicit political focus, and addressed development policy from the viewpoint of an aid donor country rather than the recipient countries, the objectives of the two projects substantially overlapped. Among other goals, each aimed to determine the impact of international migration on the economic development of the countries in question and to suggest what changes in aid and development policy might be required in light of this impact.

The general conclusion of the SPC-ILO study is that international migration from Polynesian countries has had a negative impact on the economic development of those countries and that social and economic policy should therefore be designed to reduce or minimize it. On the other hand, the IPS study argues that international migration plays a positive role in maintaining a satisfactory level of living in the islands and, while emigration should not now be encouraged, policy measures aimed at reducing it would be misplaced if not dangerous.⁵ Some of the qualifications attached to these research conclusions and policy recommendations will be discussed here, but for the present it will suffice that the conclusions of the two studies are essentially contradictory.

For academic social scientists, contrasting or contradictory research

findings are a familiar phenomenon and certainly no cause for concern. On the contrary, controversy in science is not only unavoidable but also desirable since it shows that attention is being drawn to important problems and perhaps foreshadows major scientific advances. For politicians or other policymakers, however, contradictory research findings and policy recommendations emerging from applied studies are problematic and likely to lead to impatience or disillusion with social science input to policy issues. A politician reading the reports of these projects side by side (a somewhat arduous task that I suspect few would attempt) may well conclude that if social science findings are so flexible that opposite conclusions can be drawn from "the same" data by apparently equally competent scientists, then it may be preferable to base policy decisions on purely political considerations, ideology, or personal intuition. Why, the politician may well ask, should I ask for research if social scientists are unable to provide me with a reliable, definitive basis for action? As Belshaw (1976, 3) has phrased it in a similar context: "How can I trust you?"

Three objectives are pursued in this article. The first is to explore the general question of how contradictory research findings and policy recommendations are made possible—indeed, likely—by the very nature of social science knowledge and its mode of production. This requires a discussion of the metascience of the social sciences in general and applied social science in particular. The second objective is to determine, in the particular case of these applied research studies on Polynesian migration, how contradictory conclusions were actually reached. This issue requires an exploration of the structure and content of the two arguments to locate the specific components of each that are in conflict. The third objective is to evaluate the two arguments from the point of view of their logical and empirical adequacy with a view to the potential for a theoretical synthesis of the two positions. The underlying assumption in the analysis is that the growth and development of scientific knowledge proceeds to some extent dialectically and that it is therefore useful to confront theories and perhaps even to exaggerate their differences initially to facilitate their eventual synthesis.

COMMON GROUND?

Determining the exact points of contention between competing arguments is a complex and rather difficult process. Logically, contradictory results

may derive from any component of an argument—from basic premises or assumptions, from any number of intermediate linking propositions, or from reports of observations. As Garfinkel (1981, 12) points out, however, apparently competing explanations of a phenomenon often answer different questions, even though they talk as if they are about the same thing. To compare explanatory theories, then, it is first necessary to determine whether they are addressing the same questions—that is, to determine common ground. This is made all the more complicated by the tendency of theory to construct explanations of a phenomenon in terms of its own representation of that phenomenon (Garfinkel 1981, 12). Thus a theory may become a self-contained “language game” whose logic and conceptual terms are so internalized that comparison with other theories becomes virtually impossible. In an extreme case, a metalanguage may be required to bridge two or more theories prior to their comparison.

In the present case, however, there is sufficient similarity of concepts that such a metalanguage is not required. Nevertheless, identifying the points of agreement and contention is by no means an easy task. As a first step, it is necessary to carry out an *exegesis du texte* to reveal the structure and content of the competing arguments. To serve this exposition, the key substantive propositions that appear to be in contention have been identified and compiled in Table 3 under four subcategories, along with a fifth subcategory outlining the main policy recommendations.

An examination of the propositions in Table 3 confirms a sufficient similarity of interest, terminology, and research questions in the two approaches to justify their systematic comparison. While the two arguments cannot be reconstructed such that they can be matched proposition for proposition, generally, and in some areas specifically, the two explanations are clearly competitive. This is especially evident in the policy recommendations (Table 3, section 5), in which the SPC-ILO report advocates a broad-based retreat from a wide range of external linkages in favor of economic autarky, cultural nationalism, and reduced consumption. In contrast, the IPS study advocates the continuation of a form of managed dependency, with primary attention devoted to maintaining present levels of consumption and broad general welfare. Ironically, both groups advocate a reduction in the influence of outside experts.

Also evident from Table 3 is that the two approaches conflict on various levels. Disagreement is not only over what the facts of the matter are, but

also—and substantially—about the most appropriate perspective from which to view the facts. This is the point at which the commonsense conception of science held by the politician is at odds with the reality of scientific discourse. The commonsense (and narrowly empirical) view is that facts should “speak for themselves” without the aid of interpreters. But if facts are not in reality self-explanatory, how can the validity of competing explanations be judged? What else is scientific discourse about?

THEORETICAL MODELS

The role of theory in science, policymaking, and general discourse is much misunderstood in contemporary life. Horkheimer (1972, 232) attributes hostility to theory to a repressed fear of what critical thinking will reveal about the social institutions to which we have—perhaps unnecessarily—adapted ourselves. Administrators are skeptical of theory because they associate the term with speculative or hypothetical thinking that has little or no relevance for practical issues. Technical assistance agencies often pander to this concern by eliminating discussions of theory in their reports in favor of an end run directly to the “facts.” Agencies also repress the discussion of theory at meetings, classes, and workshops, possibly out of a fear that their worldview or definition of what is a development problem might be questioned. Theoretical discussion may even be repressed in scientific meetings: at a meeting on international migration in Honolulu in 1984, for example, one participant argued that theoretical discussions were useless since they always degenerated into theology.

The administrator’s view that theory consists only of loose speculations lacking practical content is, of course, fundamentally mistaken, although a dwindling number of empirical social scientists may hold similar views. Only the most narrowly empirical researcher would consider it possible to conduct a social investigation without a conceptual framework, and in many cases this is all that may be implied by the concept of theory. It is also true that theories are frequently much more than that—complex, logically integrated systems of assumptions, axioms, hypotheses, and propositions, the discussion of which can take on the character of biblical scholasticism.

A comparison of the theoretical models employed by the two studies under discussion is difficult because while the IPS report includes an

Table 3. Contrasting Research Conclusions and Policy Recommendations of SPC-ILO and IPS Studies

SPC-ILO

1. *Effects of migration on population growth, the labor supply, the quality of the labor force, and agricultural production*

a. Migration has failed to reduce the pressure of population on agricultural resources because of continued high fertility levels, the absence of land tenure reform, and changing attitudes toward agriculture (89).*

b. The emigration of labor has led to a decline in *total* and *per capita* agricultural production (both cash crops and subsistence, but particularly food crops), partly through the removal from production of distant or marginal land (34–35) and partly through the shortage of labor power. Rural areas of the Pacific are not generally characterized by surplus labor (43). Where food-crop production has fallen, malnutrition is one result (33).

c. Migration has resulted in a “brain and skill drain” from rural to urban areas and from Pacific Island countries to metropolitan centers. This effect follows from the selectivity of migration, which removes a disproportionate number of the young (88), well-educated, and more highly skilled (21). Migration results in the loss of “the more energetic, skilled, and innovative individuals” (21). The poorest rural inhabitants do not migrate because they lack the minimal resources migration requires (26) and have insufficient education to obtain an urban job.

* Numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers in the SPC-ILO report (Connell 1987) and the IPS report (Bertram and Watters 1984), respectively.

a. The large outflows of population from such countries as Niue and the Cook Islands, especially in the 1970s, has siphoned off population growth and removed from these countries any actual or potential surplus labor (134-141). This population outflow has resulted in labor shortages in some occupations, driven up the price of labor, and contributed to the decline in agricultural production (175). However, the correlation between high levels of emigration and decline in export agriculture does not mean that the latter is the cause of the former; they are "two faces of the same coin" (142).

b. Where emigration outlets are lacking (Kiribati, Tuvalu), surplus labor exists or is a real possibility.

c. Emigration should not be viewed simply as a net loss of human resources from the economy but as a more or less conscious decision of kinship units to allocate their labor resources to those accessible labor markets that will bring the highest return. Thus migration is not necessarily expressive of individualism but is consistent with a kinship-based mode of production in which families act as rational economic actors. The view that emigration represents a simple loss of labor and productive capacity fails to recognize that the local and migrant components of the labor force are part of a single organic community.

d. The allocation of labor abroad reflects a rational assessment by kinship units of the potential of commercial export agriculture, which is constrained by the inability to achieve economies of scale given the island land tenure system and the high cost of transportation to external markets.

continued

Table 3. *Continued*

SPC-ILO

2. Effects of migrant remittances on income, economic growth, and investment

- a. Migrant remittances “are rarely channeled into productive investment in line with national development policies,” but are spent on imported consumer goods and housing (89). “Remittances are largely used for immediate consumption (food and clothes), housing and consumer durables, although they may be invested in education or subsequent migration” (35).
 - b. Migrant remittances have adversely affected agricultural production by permitting some persons to withdraw from productive activities (34), have caused balance of payments problems, and have added to inflation.
 - c. Migrant source countries have become dependent on both remittances from abroad and the imported food that is purchased with them. The consumption of imported food has led to the deterioration of diets and health problems due to inferior nutrition (44).
 - d. Although migrant remittances have contributed to economic growth, they have not contributed to development (36).
 - e. Return migrants have invested in personal welfare, unproductive consumption goods, or social amenities rather than development projects (38, 89).
 - f. Migrant remittances have not been able to compensate for the absence of labor through investment in technological improvement because a labor-saving technology appropriate to the root-crop and bush-crop agricultural systems of the Pacific Islands is not available (34).
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a. Remittance income has largely offset the decline in income from export agriculture, thus maintaining consumption while reducing the need for inefficient local labor input. The alleged tendency of aggregate remittances to fall through time as kinship linkages between migrants and nonmigrants weaken is not supported by the empirical evidence from Cook Islands data (132).

b. Although declining commercial agricultural production has led to an imbalance of trade, with imports exceeding exports by wide and increasing margins, this is not an unfavorable situation (175). The so-called trade deficit is not a serious problem (205).

c. The flow of remittances should not be seen in isolation but as part of a multidimensional flow of "current-account invisibles" of various kinds. Other dimensions include budgetary and development aid, revenue from postage stamp sales, fees for fishing rights, and so forth. These processes are central rather than peripheral to the economy and render inapplicable models of economic development that stress local production as the basis for economic growth.

continued

Table 3. *Continued*

SPC-ILO

3. Socioeconomic inequality, social organization, and cultural values

- a. Migration has encouraged individualism, thereby undermining traditional authority structures. (In some countries return migrants have supported the existing social hierarchy [36].) Migrant selectivity of the more educated and skilled has subsequently led to the loss of leadership and political bargaining power (40).
 - b. By contributing to individualism, migration has worsened social inequality in sending areas (38–40).
 - c. The receipt of remittances is not related to the real needs of households but tends to increase needs by exacerbating inequality within the sending society (36).
 - d. Where migrant remittances have facilitated the establishment of cash-cropping operations they have increased inequality among households or lineages within the village (36).
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4. Economic development, self-reliance, and dependency

- a. Migration and remittances have fostered dependence on external sources of cash income (36).
 - b. The substitution of cash remittances for onshore food production has led to dependence on food imports leading in turn to deteriorating diets (37).
 - c. Through migration and remittances, these Pacific countries have surrendered the self-reliance that characterized the precolonial history and have become increasingly dependent on the “global economy” as represented by such linkages with the outside world as commodity trade and financial aid.
 - d. “Emigration and the consolidation of a commercial economy has contributed to the incorporation of Pacific Island countries into the global economy—albeit on the extreme periphery” (83). Emigration and the inflow of remittances have not resulted in the “restructuring” of Pacific Island economies.
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- a. Migration has led to a loss of potential leadership (141). On the other hand, most island leaders have themselves spent long periods abroad, and this experience had helped them to acquire important skills in negotiating with metropolitan countries.
 - b. Remittances have had an egalitarian impact on national income distribution (170) since outer-island communities share more equally in them than in other finance flows (eg, budgetary and development aid).
 - c. Migration has evidently led to depopulation and social malaise, especially on Niue (207); but inappropriate development models have also contributed to this by holding out the false promise of autonomous development.
 - d. Migration is not necessarily expressive of individualism but is consistent with a kinship-based mode of production in which families act as rational actors.
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- a. Far from being a pathological condition, dependence for Pacific ministates represents a generally successful attempt by island communities to maintain a standard of living above what could realistically be obtained on the basis of local production.
- b. Policies supposedly aimed to reduce dependence have posed the most immediate threat to the interests of the peoples of these societies (72).

Table 3. *Continued*

SPC-ILO

5. Policy implications and recommendations

a. At the highest level is the pursuit of a self-reliant development strategy. This entails reducing dependence on such imported goods as “foods, oil products, capital equipment as well as expertise” (86). Supplementary measures would need to be taken to “change living styles at given income levels—using taxes, price policies, advertising and perhaps rationing.” A “more selective approach to external influences of all kinds, including skilled manpower and technical assistance” is also recommended (87). Pacific Island countries have surrendered the self-reliance that characterized their precolonial history and have become increasingly dependent on the “global economy,” as represented by such linkages with the outside world as commodity trade and financial aid.

b. Pacific countries should adopt social and economic policies “as shields against the expense and inappropriateness of modern consumption styles and technologies” (87). These might include support for traditional customs and languages and a stronger nationalism (including increasing national ownership of assets).

c. The support of agriculture by means of “(1) a tariff on food imports; (2) import restrictions; (3) devaluation of the domestic currency” (38).

d. Increased emphasis on family planning and a comprehensive population distribution policy.

e. Labor-exporting countries should consider “the establishment of policies relating to international migration” and “review the extent to which international migration is consistent with national development policy” (63).

f. Measures to promote the “the better utilization of remittances,” such as giving special “priority for groups going abroad to raise money for economic projects”; the issue of economic investment bonds (64).

g. The transfer of pension rights from metropolitan countries to facilitate the return of long-term migrants (64).

h. The reevaluation of bonding schemes to retain persons receiving higher education at government expense (64).

a. Foreign aid should continue in the form of both project aid and the subsidy of government budgets. But this aid should not be conceived as leading ultimately to autonomous, self-sustaining economies capable of generating sufficient income to maintain present living standards. Policy should not be based on the pretence that aid is intended or likely to bring about development (373–375). The attempt to promote the Western model of development is unrealistic.

b. The primary objective of aid should be to maintain present patterns of social organization and levels of living in the island countries. The village mode of production, which is the foundation of social and economic life, should be supported and maintained. Attempts to create economic development are likely to undermine this system and reduce social welfare and satisfaction in the longer run. The essential prerequisites for autonomous, self-sustaining growth are absent in these economies (384).

c. Budgetary aid that supports public sector employment should be continued, but greater emphasis should be placed on direct producer subsidies so as to maintain and encourage small-holder production and thereby to discourage emigration (386).

d. Education policy should recognize the dual requirements of assisting appropriate development in the islands as well as producing persons able to function economically and socially in the migrant-receiving countries (370).

e. Technical assistance and foreign aid should be formulated and implemented on a country-specific basis following detailed contextual studies. Of particular importance is the extent to which the economy in question is aid- and remittance-led rather than export-led.

f. The influence of experts from international agencies should be minimized.

explicit presentation of a theoretical model, the theoretical framework of the SPC-ILO study is not discussed explicitly but remains secluded in the text.

The argument of the IPS study is that the small island states of Polynesia (and some in Micronesia) constitute a distinctive class of society and economy that must be analyzed on its own terms. The unique features of these microstates make theoretical models of development or underdevelopment based on experience elsewhere in the third world inapplicable. These unique features are summarized in the acronym MIRAB, representing the main components of the system—migration, remittances, aid, bureaucracy (Bertram and Watters 1985, 1986; Watters 1987). In other developing countries, these processes also exist to varying degrees, but they perform a marginal role in the economy; in the Polynesian microstates, however, they are powerful determinants of economic performance and social welfare.

These MIRAB societies are a product of nineteenth-century “welfare-state colonialism” extended into the era of independence and quasi independence in a modified form. Foreign aid in such systems flows mostly from the former colonial power and has the effect of maintaining a standard of welfare that both donor governments and island residents consider appropriate. Although much financial aid is couched in the rhetoric of economic development and is considered to contribute to eventual economic independence and self-reliance, its actual role is to subsidize the level of living. One way it does this is by supporting a public service that is substantially larger than could be justified on economic or social grounds. Public service employment acts as a mechanism of income redistribution since most families have some members in government employment, and some families have many. Migration and private remittances also subsidize the living standards of island families, with only a small proportion of remittances being invested in economic development projects. Given the level of public and private subsidy, the usual economic incentives to investment and local labor commitment are seriously weakened.

The basic elements of the MIRAB system were already identified in previous works (eg, Hayes 1982). But the unique contribution of the IPS study was to develop a model that links the elements into a composite theory of social welfare.

Although Pacific MIRAB states are probably unique because of the scale of aid, migration, and remittance flows, they may not be unique in bring-

ing into question the applicability of the nation-state concept to socioeconomic analysis in the context of large-scale international migration. Analogous migration systems are developing in various parts of the world. The previously mentioned West Atlantic system identified by Patterson is another example. Similarly, Weiner has noted the analytical problems that arise out of international migration patterns developing elsewhere in the third world.

If one's welfare perspective took as its starting point the well-being of an entire national population wherever it lives, then a cost-benefit assessment should not be limited to the country of origin and the cost-benefit ratios would change. Consider for example what the World Bank's annual World Development Report would look like if populations, not nation-states, were the units of analysis. Assume there were tables on per capita income, per capita growth rates, population growth rates, education, longevity, and so on by nationality rather than by country. Turks, Yugoslavs, Portuguese, Greeks, Algerians, Tunisians, Moroccans, and other emigrating peoples would look better than do the equivalent tables by country. (Weiner 1987, 197)

The main conclusion that follows from the application of the MIRAB model to Polynesian microstates is that the system as a whole is functioning in a satisfactory steady state. Several goals are simultaneously achieved: consumption and social welfare are maintained at a higher level than would be possible on the basis of domestic production; the village mode of production and its accompanying land tenure system that provide the foundations for social welfare in the islands are left intact; and wasteful and inefficient efforts to increase domestic economic growth by means of misconceived development projects are avoided.

The policy implications of the model (see Table 3, section 5) follow from the judgment that these systems function satisfactorily and should therefore be maintained through supportive government policies. The key change that is required is in the attitudes of aid donors, politicians, and planners; instead of conceiving of budgetary and project aid as leading ultimately to self-sustaining domestic development, these policymakers should recognize the true function of aid as a subsidy to living standards. Attempts to impose "development" would result in the destruction of those neotraditional institutions that are the source of social stability and material welfare.

As already mentioned, the theoretical model of migration and develop-

ment employed by the SPC-ILO study is implicit rather than explicitly stated. Although all of the elements of the MIRAB model receive some descriptive mention in the reports, there is no attempt to weight these elements in terms of importance or to link them in a systematic way. Abstracting from the various reports, however, the general theoretical model underlying the SPC-ILO analysis can be reconstructed. The condition underlying Polynesian migration is the "incorporation" of Pacific island economies into the "global economy." The exact mode of incorporation that is envisaged here is not clear, but the suggestion seems to be that cash-cropping leading to monetization and imported education systems are the main elements. Incorporation in turn undermines traditional social organization, especially systems of leadership and social control that in turn produce "individualism." The proximate determinant of migration is thus individualism; once freed from traditional constraints and leadership, individuals detach themselves from their family and community and migrate in search of greater material rewards than the island economy can provide. The decision to migrate is ultimately based on a rational individual calculus of costs and benefits, with acquisitiveness as the underlying motive. Once set in motion, however, migration results in a series of feedback loops that tend to perpetuate it as well as produce other, generally destabilizing, consequences.

First, migration results in the flow of cash remittances back to the home economy. But remittances are channeled through individuals rather than traditional leaders; thus remittances tend to intensify individualism, which in turn leads to further migration. The feedback loop is completed as migration increases the degree of incorporation through participation in the metropolitan labor market.

A second feedback loop operates through the economic system and only indirectly through the proximate determinant of migration (individualism). Incorporation into the global economy creates uneven development leading to the unequal distribution of employment opportunities in space. The spatial units subject to uneven development are not made clear, but the impression is that there are two dimensions: (1) uneven development within each country; (2) uneven development between Pacific countries and the metropolitan (formerly colonial) countries to which migrants go. As in the previous loop, the intervening variable is remittances. Migrants remit funds to the home economy that undermine its productive foundations, thereby "underdeveloping" the economy and

increasing the discrepancy between the level of development in the metropolitan center and that in the island economy. This discrepancy in turn induces more people to migrate.

A third feedback loop links migration with increasing social inequality. Migrants are selected disproportionately from those families who are already relatively well off, who then share disproportionately in the receipt of migrant remittances; this, in turn, tends to reinforce the existing system of unequal rewards or possibly to worsen it. It is not made clear if increasing social inequality in turn fosters more migration through the mechanism of relative deprivation, but this would complete the third feedback loop and would be consistent with the general model.

Although none of the standard sources are cited, the general explanatory model underlying this formulation is the world-system approach to third world underdevelopment together with some elements of dependency theory—adapted to the explanation of international migration. This approach has been labeled alternatively the *conflict* (Papademetriou 1984, 390) or *structuralist* (Weiner 1987, 183) school.⁶ The common feature of structuralist approaches is the view that international migration is symptomatic of the “penetration” of the sending society by the world capitalist system and the incorporation of such societies into the global economy.⁷

A general criticism of dependency theory is unnecessary in this context. It is sufficient to mention that it has serious deficiencies in explaining underdevelopment even in Latin America—the task for which it was initially developed (Chirot and Hall 1982; Lall 1975; O’Brien 1975). The real issue here is whether a general dependency or world-system model can be usefully applied to the very different circumstances of Pacific Island microstates. The main question to which dependency theory sought an answer was why—in countries richly endowed with raw materials and containing all necessary economies of scale—economic development failed to occur while poverty and misery increased. The alternative explanation provided by modernization theory focused almost exclusively on internal conditions, particularly the constraints of tradition. Dependency and world-systems theory correctly draw attention to the conditioning effects of external relations, particularly colonialism.

Two problems arise in attempting to apply such an approach to Pacific Island conditions. First, the primary object of explanation in the Latin American case—mass poverty—does not easily apply to the Pacific Islands

in general or island Polynesia in particular. While Pacific Islanders may experience relative deprivation by comparison with the consumption standards of the European or Japanese middle class, the incidence of absolute poverty of the type found in parts of Asia or Latin America is extremely low. The second, related question that dependency theory seeks to answer in Latin America is why indigenous, national, industrial capitalism is underdeveloped. This question has more applicability in the Pacific Islands case, but adequate alternative explanations exist to explain the relative absence of industrial capitalism: the islands have few raw materials; they are extremely isolated from large markets, and transportation costs are high; populations are small and scattered, offering no scale economies and small domestic markets; the supply price of labor is high since the indigenous population has virtually universal access to land from which subsistence needs can be met with moderate labor input.

Indigenous capitalist development in the plantation, trade, and transport sectors in the Pacific has certainly been conspicuously absent until recently, and there is little doubt that the superior skills and resources of immigrant Europeans and Chinese and foreign trading companies—with the support of colonial authorities—crowded out native enterprise and discouraged would-be entrepreneurs. But it is also true that traditional economic organization and culture also played an important role in limiting the growth of indigenous capitalist enterprises.

The view that third world underdevelopment is not simply the absence of development but rather the consequence of an exploitive system of unequal exchange in which the development of metropolitan capitalism resulted from the extraction of surplus from the periphery at the cost of its underdevelopment and economic stagnation also has limited applicability in the Pacific—especially in Polynesia. Is it possible to argue that the development of the Pacific-rim industrial-capitalist economies of the United States, New Zealand, and Australia (or Great Britain and Germany in an earlier era) occurred at the expense of the development of the Pacific Islands? Even if the entire economic surplus produced in these far-flung islands since the advent of the colonial period were transferred to these metropolitan countries, the effects would be minuscule by comparison with the other factors that contributed to their growth. This is not to deny that foreign capitalist enterprises operating in the Pacific made (and continue to make) substantial profits and many families became rich through such enterprises; but this is different from saying that the extrac-

tion of surplus from the Pacific Islands facilitated the national development of the metropolitan countries to which they were linked. It might be possible to salvage the SPC-ILO argument by employing a weaker conception of incorporation than that found in dependency or world-system theory. As Hall (1986) has pointed out, the incorporation of nonstate societies by nation states, empires, or a world system can occur in a wide variety of forms and to varying degrees. But the concept of incorporation employed by world-system theory refers not simply to any form of external contact but specifically to contact with an expanding capitalist system. The role of the large-scale trading companies, plantations, and the like in this process seems clear enough, but beyond that point ambiguity sets in. Would missionaries, beachcombers, and petty traders be conceived as agents of incorporation? Would welfare-state colonialism be considered a form of incorporation?

If world-system theory fails on the level of historical explanation, it is probably superfluous to review the policy recommendations that follow from it. Yet the essentially nationalist policies proposed by the SPC-ILO study (see Table 3, section 5) presuppose that the theory is fundamentally correct. These policy recommendations reflect the dependency or world-system view that "autarkic closure" provides the best strategy for the development of third world societies (Chirot and Hall 1982, 98). Such policy approaches are unlikely to be attempted in Polynesia for a variety of reasons—one of which is simply lack of realism. Most Pacific Island leaders would be reluctant to embrace social and economic policies that have most recently been attempted by Cambodia under Pol Pot or Burma under Ne Win—with little evidence of success.

If we reject the thesis that the classical dependency theory of underdevelopment is applicable to Pacific Island conditions, what consequences does this have for the SPC-ILO argument regarding migration? Although the argument is weakened by association, it is by no means destroyed. All the processes identified in the three feedback loops described previously could continue to occur outside the framework of dependency or world-system theory. This is because the core of the SPC-ILO explanation of migration is a theory of culture change: as already indicated, the proximate determinant of migration is individualism; if penetration did not promote individualism, then it would not (necessarily) produce migration. Thus individualism fulfils the explanatory role of what Braybrooke (1987, 23–24) calls an INUS condition, that is, "an Insufficient but Necessary com-

ponent in an Unnecessary but Sufficient combination of conditions." This is to say that while individualism is conceived as a necessary but not sufficient condition for migration to occur, the other conditions in the explanation (eg, penetration by world capitalism) are sufficient but not necessary. In other words, factors other than capitalist penetration could also produce migration if they also produced individualism.

Thus it is possible to detach the SPC-ILO explanation of migration from the specific conditions envisaged by dependency or world-system theory. This leaves open the question of what other conditions may be sufficient to cause individualism, but this question need not be addressed here because the countertheory of migration found in the IPS study explicitly rejects the hypothesis that migration is necessarily a reflection of individualism.⁸ Here lies the essential contradiction between the two models of migration. In the IPS model, migration is consistent with a mode of production and cultural system in which behavior is largely determined by traditional norms of family loyalty, support and respect for elders, obedience to parents, harmony within the family and group, the collective sharing of burdens and benefits, and so on. Individualism may be a sufficient condition for migration to occur, in combination with other necessary conditions; but it is not in itself a necessary one: migration can, and in Polynesia does, reflect the interests and goals of families or larger kinship units. Migration is economic in the sense that it reflects a rational calculus of costs and benefits, and it is social in the sense that the unit whose welfare is the ultimate subject of this rational calculus is the family or larger kinship unit.

The SPC-ILO model, in contrast, explains migration as a rational calculus of costs and benefits by individual social actors and can be seen as essentially neoclassical in approach. Social factors are relevant to the explanation only insofar as they explain how individuals become detached from the kinship system and motivated to become consumers. Logically this must be so since unless individuals are free from the control of the kinship system (or other social system), a calculation of purely individual costs and benefits would not be possible.

A further problem arises. If it is possible to show that individualism was not the major cause of Polynesian migration and that migrants were motivated primarily by family values and goals, would it follow that the negative feedback loops postulated by the SPC-ILO study do not operate? The answer is probably no. But a contradiction in the SPC-ILO position is evi-

dent here. If individualism is a necessary condition for migration, how can we account for the fact that migrants remit at all? The very existence of remittances must be taken as confirmation of the argument that migration in effect, and to some degree, is supportive of the family. When migrants remit voluntarily, the persistence of primary group sentiments is confirmed; when migrants remit reluctantly, the ability of kin groups to enforce compliance with obligations must be acknowledged.

Nevertheless, it is logically possible that migration sets up a negative feedback process that undermines family solidarity—even if the migration was originally motivated by a desire to maintain it. This is a question of the unintended consequences of social action. The SPC-ILO argument is based mainly on one empirical study in Western Samoa that showed that remittances were flowing to individual family members, bypassing the traditional chiefs (*matai*), who are the customary agents of redistribution (Shankman 1976). Even if this was widespread, it is difficult to conceive how individuals in Samoan village society would be able to monopolize the use of such funds for long. In Tonga and the Cook Islands, it is almost certain that remittances are sent primarily to household heads (parents, grandparents, or uncles), although occasional direct payments to brothers and sisters occur. In any case, pressures to redistribute through such institutions as the church and family ceremonials remain strong regardless of who receives the money or goods in the first instance.

The uneven-development feedback loop could also occur as a form of unintended consequence of migration, irrespective of its motivation. Insofar as uneven economic growth between the island periphery and the metropolitan centers is concerned, however, the island economies may have held their ground during the past decade—or possibly improved their position; but recent data are difficult to come by.⁹

The operations of the third feedback loop (inequality motivating migration leading to further inequality) again raises the question of how remittances are distributed. As already indicated, the SPC-ILO study explicitly exempts Western Samoa (Connell 1983a, 46) from this process because of the system of kin-sponsored migration that selects migrants on the basis of merit, need, and equity. Yet probably all Polynesian societies contain similar mechanisms. In any case, the exemption of Western Samoa—by far the country with the largest number of migrants—from the process of increasing inequality greatly limits the scope of the proposition.

Even if migration does increase inequality, the real questions are by

how much, for how long, and with what consequences for individuals and groups? While it can be readily agreed that social inequality is an odious condition and that increasing inequality over a long period implies social regression, it is logically possible for inequality to increase yet leave every person in the system better off than under a more egalitarian distribution. Suppose the original distribution in terms of consumption units was

$$A = 3$$

$$B = 3$$

$$C = 3$$

Then following a period of migration this changed to

$$A = 4$$

$$B = 5$$

$$C = 10$$

(after Garfinkel 1981, 101).

Under the second distribution, everyone would be better off, even though the system as a whole was more unequal. Obviously this problem raises important questions of distributive justice, and probably social integration as well, but it is at least plausible to argue that many people would prefer the second distribution to the first.

This issue can be further explored using the economist's concept of "externality"—a cost or a benefit that affects individuals or social units without their performing any action. The implication of the SPC-ILO approach is that the migration of members of one family creates a "negative externality," or unintended cost for another family, none of whose members migrate. Even if this were the case, the appropriate policy response would not necessarily be to constrain the opportunity to migrate but to compensate the family that suffers.

PARADIGM CLASH?

Another way to conceptualize the problem of competing arguments is in terms of what Thomas Kuhn (1970) described as the "clash of paradigms"—that is, a stage in scientific development when one research paradigm as a total gestalt is confronted with an opposing paradigm also conceived as a totality. Dispute over facts is less important here than a shift in perspective—from looking at problems in one way to looking at them in another.

A paradigm clash is not so much a matter of what the facts are (according to Kuhn, all competing theories "agree with the facts") as a difference of opinion as to which questions are significant and meaningful. Newtonian science, for example, did not attempt to answer the question that perturbed medieval physics ("Why do objects move?") but rephrased the question to "Why does the motion of objects change?" (Garfinkel 1981, 8).

Aspects of such reformulation of questions are apparent in the studies under consideration here. For example, the SPC-ILO reports make much of the fact that total and per capita agricultural production have declined as a result of migration and characterizes this as a loss to the domestic economy; the IPS study concedes that agricultural production has fallen and that the decline is related to the migration of the labor force, but interprets these facts quite differently. Island families, the IPS report argues, allocate their labor resources to a variety of labor markets to minimize risk and to receive the greatest financial returns. Domestic agriculture is risky and brings low returns; labor export is therefore a rational economic decision on the part of the family unit conceived as an economic decision maker, and the decline in agricultural output is simply a by-product of such decisions. The question is not whether domestic agricultural production has declined (it has), but whether this decline is important in its consequences.

Similarly, both approaches agree that reliance on overseas labor markets for income at home makes the domestic economy dependent on external conditions; but while the SPC-ILO study sees dependence as a problem, the IPS study argues that "dependence doesn't matter" (Bertram and Waters 1984, 116). The real question, according to these authors, is whether standards of living and social security have been maintained.

Appropriate as the concept of paradigm clash is in this case, its limitations are nevertheless apparent. Paradigm clash implies that competing theories form a coherent, systematic, integrated whole. Although the SPC-ILO study is generally structuralist in orientation, it also employs several ad hoc propositions from the same "modernization" school that dependency theory was formulated to oppose. Indeed, the SPC-ILO study appears to be based on an amalgam of assumptions and propositions with no clear theoretical coherence. Similarly, the IPS study is built around a broadly neoclassical economic framework, but also contains an explicit criticism of the neoclassical modernization school and an ethnographic analysis of social and economic institutions that is rare in neoclassical thinking.

THE PROBLEM OF EMBEDDED VALUATIONS

Another problem with the concept of paradigm clash is that it is oriented primarily to the natural sciences. Although there is a general continuity of methods between the natural and social sciences, there is an important difference between "natural" and "social" facts. The view of naive positivism is that scientific facts are independent of theory—that is, they are objective in the sense of neutral to any particular theoretical explanation. A more sophisticated view (see Popper 1959) holds that all scientific facts are "theory-laden," or "theory impregnated" (Garfinkel 1981, 135); facts are not neutral to theories but rather gain their meaning from a particular theory and are therefore in some sense biased. The extreme version of this view ("internal realism") holds that what is taken to be reality is itself entirely defined by theory (Braybrooke 1987, 30). This view would rule out any empirical test of competing theories. But it is not necessary to defend this extreme position to accept the view that concepts are theory impregnated. In this respect, the natural and social sciences are essentially the same. In the natural sciences, however, the theories with which facts are infused are primarily physical. In the social sciences, the strictly physical aspects of a fact are unimportant; what defines a fact as social is the bestowal of a social meaning or significance to it. Social facts thus have a dual character: the physical, externally observable aspect (eg, behavior) and the social meaning accorded to the behavior by a particular collectivity.

The further problem arises in the social sciences that the social meaning given to a particular item of behavior may be derived from the theory of society or culture (ethnotheory) of the collectivity in question or from an outside observer's theory of (that) society. This further duality is problematic because it is often difficult to separate the meaning ascribed to an act of behavior by a social theory from an evaluation of that behavior. Thus social facts tend to be not only theory impregnated but also "value impregnated" (Wisdom 1987, 15–16).¹⁰ According to the metascience of logical-positivism, however, the social scientist's theory of behavior differs from the social actor's in that the former is objective, treating the values assigned to social action by members of the society as simply another class of facts. Thus a scientific explanation is, or should be, value free in the sense that no value terms are to be present in the concepts used in the explanation.

The belief that scientific explanations can be value free has important

implications in the sphere of social policy. The positivistic conception of the relationship between theory and practice can be illustrated by the following practical syllogisms:

A causes B	(scientific law or theory)
B is desirable	(value)
<hr/>	
Do A	(policy)
or	
A causes B	(scientific law or theory)
B is undesirable	(value)
<hr/>	
Avoid A	(policy)

(after Garfinkel 1981, 136).

Science is said to provide the explanatory laws (causal or probabilistic), while policymakers provide the values that complete the syllogism. However, the fact that the explanation (A causes B) does not express or imply approval or disapproval does not eliminate values from the explanation (Garfinkel 1981, 145). Any explanation of a phenomenon involves a selection among all the possible antecedents. In strict terms, the total “cause” of an event or state of affairs is everything that occurred up to that time. This is the only type of explanation that could be said to be absolutely free of presuppositions. But such an explanation is impossible; some antecedents have to be eliminated from consideration to make explanation manageable as a practical matter.

This suggests that all scientific explanations presuppose a specific “contrast space” (Garfinkel 1981, 21–48), that is, a range of possible factors or antecedent conditions that are treated by the scientist as potential explanations for the phenomenon in question. Value judgments can therefore enter scientific discourse in the context of the selection of antecedents that are admitted to or excluded from the pool of potential explanatory conditions. Thus the statement “rapid population growth causes unemployment” is ideological in the sense that all other possible antecedent conditions of unemployment are suppressed. Note that the statement can be considered ideological in its structure regardless of the intentions or motivations of the speaker.

The problem of identifying the values embedded in social science explanations either in the form of suppressed antecedents or implicit presuppositions regarding desirable or undesirable social arrangements is formida-

ble. It is helpful if value premises have been made explicit at the outset. But even then, values may be present in the choice of theory and more subtly in the forms of expression and language of reports. Again we are faced with the need for a form of literary interpretation (hermeneutics)—an exercise far removed from the capacities or interests of a politician or policymaker.

A detailed hermeneutic venture is certainly beyond the scope of this article, but a brief discussion of a few examples is perhaps warranted. The most conspicuous difference between the two studies under discussion with respect to value presuppositions concerns the issue of dependency. Although this concept is at the core of the SPC-ILO argument, it is not defined, and its relevance to development issues in Pacific microstates is not discussed. It appears to be taken for granted that any form of dependency is a bad thing—virtually a form of social pathology. Similarly, the obverse condition to that of dependence—autonomy or self-reliance—is presupposed to be good and something to be promoted by government policy. In contrast, the IPS study rejects the argument that dependence is a pathological condition in the context of isolated Pacific economies facing massive obstacles to internally generated economic growth and development. Remittance dependence in such economies is simply a reflection of rational economic decisions on the part of kinship groups that choose to allocate labor in external markets; it does not constitute an explanation of structural underdevelopment or poverty since these conditions either do not exist or are inapplicable.

The SPC-ILO study also recognizes the severe constraints facing all Pacific Island economies in attempting to raise the level of living by domestic economic development. Yet it recommends against the logical alternative of migration to distant labor markets and the remittance of a portion of migrants' wages back to the island economy on the grounds that this creates remittance dependency.

In part, the negative evaluation of remittances as a source of income derives from the observation that remittances are more likely than other forms of income to be spent on "unproductive" consumption goods. Aside from the empirical adequacy of this generalization and the questionable distinction between consumption and capital goods employed in the study, two normative value judgments are associated with this view, common among structuralist approaches: (1) that expenditures on welfare (housing, health, education, food) are economically unproductive;¹¹ (2)

that consumerism is undesirable (Wiener 1987, 194). Consistent with its underlying "liberal" philosophy, the IPS study makes no such judgment, but it is also possible to argue that a positive value judgment is present insofar as a negative one is not.

Another embedded value position in the SPC-ILO argument is the view that Pacific Islanders should be more motivated to undertake agricultural work than they appear to be. That they are not motivated to engage in agricultural work is attributed to changing attitudes determined by the declining prestige attached to working on the land. Although the factual basis of this argument could be questioned,¹² the main issue here is that the presupposition that agricultural work is in some sense superior to the receipt of remittances also appears to be in part responsible for the negative evaluation of remittance income.

Another value judgment underlying the treatment of migrant remittances in the SPC-ILO study is in the argument that the flow of cash to the island-based economy does not meet "real needs." Since basic needs are already met in Pacific Island societies, cash income from abroad can be employed only for social purposes that are linked primarily to the need for prestige and status. The argument here assumes that a distinction can be made between real needs (apparently referring to those that are met by the traditional subsistence sector) and prestige needs that derive from and are met through the modern cash sector. The further implication is that the first category of needs is legitimate, while the second is somehow superfluous and illegitimate—tantamount to a kind of false consciousness. To say the least, this represents an impoverished perspective on human needs and a rather ascetic view of human existence. Is the purchase of shoes, clothing, fuel (for heating water), or foodstuffs with remittance funds motivated only by the need for social prestige or status? And even if in part so motivated, is not the improvement in health and well-being that may result a positive benefit regardless of its motivation? All social systems employ prestige as a reward for compliance with socially desirable behavior.

EMPIRICAL VERIFICATION

A further problem with the paradigm-clash characterization is that it tends to relegate differences over facts to the background, according them a minor role in the acceptance or rejection of explanations. Yet it is obvi-

ous in the present case that facts are to some degree in dispute. For example, the IPS study argues that migrant remittances have produced a more equal distribution of income in the migrant-sending island economy, whereas the SPC-ILO study argues that remittances have exacerbated inequality. This is in large part an empirical question, although by no means a simple one since *inequality* is capable of different interpretations and can be measured in a variety of ways.

The question of empirical adequacy raises troublesome questions at the level of metatheory. What constitutes verification depends on how the relationship between theory and practice is conceived. The "interpretive" model of social science, for example, considers a "true account" of a social action to be achieved once all the social actors (and observers) involved come to talk about the action in the same way (Fay 1975, 82; Radnitsky 1968). Verification consists in arriving at a co-understanding of the meaning of the action and the social rules it reflects. For critical social science, the truth of a theory is also, in part, a function of achieving co-understanding between an observer and social actors; but in the final analysis, a theory of society is true only if—in addition to their co-understanding—both social actors and theorists are in fact able to bring about the social conditions that the theory claims will improve the social conditions that cause human suffering (Fay 1975, 108).

The metatheory of naturalistic social science generally conceives of verification as unrelated to any practical social issues or conditions of communication and therefore entirely internal to science itself. We can immediately reject the commonsense idea that science in this sense aims for certainty or "proof": scientific knowledge cannot in principle achieve certainty (Wisdom 1987, 9) since all hypotheses that have not been clearly falsified are merely provisional and may later turn out to be mistaken (Braybrooke 1987, 25). We are faced either with determining what hypotheses have been falsified (the "falsificationist" position) or with assessing the degree to which hypotheses are supported by evidence (the "verificationist" position).¹³ But what justifies treating a hypothesis as falsified on the one hand or warranted by the empirical evidence on the other is a complex matter into which many factors enter. In the final analysis, a decision must be made, justified, and then exposed to the criticism of the scientific community for possible correction.

One response to these apparently contradictory conceptions of empirical adequacy would be to choose among them and evaluate studies exclusively from one point of view. The problem with this is that whether

present in the self-understanding of the social scientist or not, each of these conceptions of verification may be present to some degree in reports of research as well as policy recommendations. The discussion that follows, however, will employ mainly the standards of "naturalistic" social science, touching only lightly on other models of verification.

The empirical conclusions of the SPC-ILO study were based on the secondary analysis of a large number of different types of studies employing various research designs, methodologies, types of data, levels of analysis, time scales, and so on. There is a sense in which the request for a policy synthesis of such studies was unrealistic, and it is not surprising that the nature of such a synthesis was an issue of some controversy within the SPC-ILO project's staff. Some believed that a brief summary paper on each country would be adequate for policy purposes. What emerged in fact was a minimonograph on each country averaging fifty pages of dense, single-spaced text. Some country reports are more than one hundred pages—way beyond the attention span of most politicians and many planners. What the advocates of brief reports failed to recognize, however, is that a short report is more difficult to write than a long one since brevity requires a choice of what weight should be given to components of the argument.

Indeed, there is no known objective method of "adding up" the conclusions of disparate studies in an inductive manner as implied by the concept of a policy synthesis. As a minimum, it would first be necessary to assess the quality of the research; this is the valid point raised by Walsh (1986). If a given hypothesis is supported by eight studies out of ten, but the two studies that rejected the hypothesis were conducted by mature, experienced researchers while the others consisted of student papers or journalist's reports, should the hypothesis be accepted or rejected? In other words, what weight should be given to various tests of validity? In part, this is a matter of methodological evaluation: How adequate was the research design? How competently were data collected? How appropriate in terms of statistical methods was the analysis of the data?¹⁴

Aside from questions of methodological adequacy, the other important determinant of the weight to be given to a given empirical study is the theory itself. What does the theory define as a crucial test?

SOME EMPIRICAL PROPOSITIONS

As implied previously, any theoretical explanation of a phenomenon will likely contain a large number of empirical propositions, not all of which

are essential to the success or failure of the theory. The selection of hypotheses or propositions to test is rather important. In this section, three propositions taken from the two rival theories under consideration have been selected for review: (1) that the decision to employ family labor abroad rather than at home is made (more or less consciously) by the family or broader kinship unit; (2) that migration is selective of the better-off members of the community rather than the poor and thus exacerbates inequality; and (3) that labor-saving technology appropriate to the root-crop agricultural systems of the Pacific Islands is not available (see Table 3 for details and sources).

Each of these propositions appears to be pivotal to the theories in question. The first of these hypotheses is a major component of the IPS model of a MIRAB economy, while the second two are key parts of the SPC-ILO argument of why migration is unable to bring either economic or social benefits to migration-oriented societies.

The proposition that emigration reflects labor-allocation decisions by family units ("transnational corporations of kin") is central to the IPS conception of a geographically dispersed but nevertheless single "organic" community. Although this concept is general to all societies of the MIRAB type, only one empirical study (from the Cook Islands) has been cited in support of it.¹⁵ What is known in general about social solidarity within Polynesian kinship systems provides a great deal of initial plausibility to this proposition, but may represent something of an idealization. Migration in Polynesia in the last fifteen years has become virtually a "mass movement" in which decisions to migrate are made far less consciously than at an earlier period in the evolution of the system when both the financial and the psychological costs of moving were substantially greater. Under present conditions, the degree to which the family is able to control the movement of its members is more than likely weakening. No doubt some parents or kin-group leaders flatter themselves that they have placed family members in various places abroad and that these migrants remain under their control or influence, but the migrants themselves may have different views.

The concept of kinship-based allocation of labor does not take into account the degree to which escape from sometimes onerous extended-family obligations or from stressful intrafamilial conflict acts as a motivation to migrate. Several studies of Samoan migrants in the United States, for example, have cited the desire to "escape the *matai* system" as a factor

in migrant motivations.¹⁶ Admittedly anecdotal evidence from Tonga suggests that the inherent inequality of the neotraditional system of rank and privilege blocks individual mobility and therefore encourages individuals to seek other routes to success completely outside that system. Under these conditions, individuals may use the extended-family system to support their own social mobility (or as a social security floor) as much as the family system uses its migrant members to maintain or improve its viability. Kotchek (1975) found that kin-group solidarity among migrant Samoans in the United States was a variable affected by the general economic climate: in times of economic stress, migrant Samoans seek support in the extended family or lineage system of redistribution; during periods of economic expansion and individual upward mobility, Samoans drift away from Samoan institutions.

This does not imply that attempts to avoid familial obligations through migration are invariably successful, but that the image of dutiful sons and daughters regularly remitting goods and funds to the "inner" island community may be partly false insofar as it implies a smoothly functioning system of obligations and reciprocity based on kin-group solidarity. Some migrants may indeed be "good remitters" (Macpherson 1988), feeling keenly the obligations to support the island-based family or calculating the long-term gains for doing so; other more individualistic migrants may also remit, but their contributions are made less frequently and reluctantly—possibly resentfully—and only after parents or other kin have invoked the obligation through actual or threatened shaming or other social controls.

The labor-allocation model may also be faulty insofar as it implies the more or less regular flow of funds analogous to monthly annuity payments or social welfare benefits. It is much more likely that remittances are irregular and mostly linked to such life-cycle events as marriages and funerals. This does not make such contributions a source of income inferior to the alternatives available at home (money from cash-cropping may also be irregular and unpredictable), but it does mean that for any particular family, funds do not flow automatically or passively from abroad but may also have to be solicited at times of need.¹⁷

The proposition that migration selects only the better-off, leaving the poor behind (as argued by the SPC-ILO report), is also open to question on empirical grounds. In the Cook Islands case, net emigration from the poorer outer islands in the 1966–1976 period was somewhat higher than

from the capital island of Rarotonga (Hayes 1982, 142). On Rarotonga itself, there is evidence that many poorer families (mostly in-migrants from the outer islands) living in the inner-town areas of Avarua emigrated during the 1970s.

There is also little evidence in the Cook Islands case to support the hypothesis that only the occupationally better-off are mobile. If the poor are those migrants who have no occupational skills other than those involved with working on the land, Cook Islands data suggest that this group was substantially involved in migration during the 1970s (Hayes 1982, 243). While the proportion of nonagricultural male workers in the migration stream was higher than their representation in the total labor force (80 percent compared with 71 percent), agricultural workers were only marginally underselected (20 percent of migrants compared with 29 percent of the labor force; Hayes 1982, 243). Selectivity by higher occupation is apparent in these data, but it is by no means extreme: the picture for the 1970s suggests a broad-based migratory movement insofar as economic strata are concerned rather than extreme selectivity for the better-off.

The Western Samoa case also provides counterevidence (which the SPC-ILO country report cites) that migrants are drawn disproportionately from the upper social strata. Since Samoans seeking entry to New Zealand on the basis of an offer of employment usually require assistance from kin already in New Zealand to obtain a job offer, the New Zealand-resident family has some control over who is able to migrate. Macpherson (1981) has reported that in such kin-sponsored situations, priority is usually given to the rural poor with kinship responsibilities, providing they show evidence of motivation to work.

Even if migration is selective of the better educated and more highly skilled at a certain stage in the development of a migration system, it is possible to show theoretically why migrant selectivity by socioeconomic status is likely to diminish through time. As Massey has pointed out:

The first migrants who leave for a new destination have no social ties to draw upon, and for them migration is costly. . . . For this reason, the first international migrants are usually not drawn from the bottom of the community hierarchy, but from the lower middle ranges. After the first migrants have left, however, the costs of migration are substantially lower for their friends and relatives still in the community of origin. . . . Once the number of network connections in an origin area reaches a critical level, migration becomes self-

perpetuating because migration itself creates the social structure needed to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the cost of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and with the lowered costs some of these people are induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad, and, in turn, reduces costs for a new set of people. (Massey 1988, 397)

The implication of this process (common to all chain-migration systems) is that the longer the system has been in operation, the more likely the migration stream will be representative of a cross-section of all social strata. The corollary to this is that policy studies based on comparative statics rather than a longitudinal perspective that recognizes dynamics and process as well as structure are likely to provide a biased perspective.

Empirical data and theoretical reasoning also suggest that migration itself tends to reduce income inequality in the community of origin in the long run, thus diminishing the importance of selectivity. The egalitarian impact of migration is greatest in migrant communities with substantial numbers of migrants and well-developed social networks:

Thus, the self-sustaining impact of remittances is greatest during the early phases of migration when vast gulfs separate the incomes of a few migrants from non-migrants; but this feedback path becomes progressively attenuated as larger and larger shares of the community gain access to migrant income. When a majority of members of a community are involved in migration, remittances act to promote income equality, and relative deprivation ceases to be a motivation for migration. (Massey 1988, 401)

The Cook Islands, Western Samoa, and American Samoa have probably already reached this stage in the evolution of their migration systems, with Tonga still in an earlier stage.

Finally, some serious doubts arise regarding the empirical adequacy of the hypothesis that appropriate labor-saving technology is unavailable for the bush-crop or root-crop agricultural systems of Polynesia and elsewhere in Oceania. This hypothesis denies that investments in improved agricultural technology could create a labor surplus, thus freeing labor for other tasks or further migration, and that remittances have any useful application in communities of origin. The catch in the hypothesis is that it seems to refer only to subsistence crops, excluding cash-cropping; yet several technological innovations can be identified that reduce the labor input in subsistence gardening. Anyone who has observed the use of tractors and rototillers in the preparation of taro plots in Rarotonga can attest to

the utility of "new" technology in traditional subsistence gardening. The use of chain saws (purchased with migrant remittances) to clear new areas of land for taro and banana cultivation has been observed in Samoa (Macpherson 1986). This hypothesis stands on extremely weak empirical grounds.

MISPLACED FAMILISM OR INDIVIDUALISM?

The contrast between the IPS and the SPC-ILO theories can usefully be summarized by making use of Mitchell's (1985) distinction between the "setting" and the "situation" of migration. By "setting," Mitchell refers to the overall economic, social, and political structures that form the background conditions out of which migration systems develop. The social "situation," on the other hand, refers to the particular set of circumstances in which actual or potential migrants find themselves. Analysis of situations consists of studying the processes by which individuals make choices given the constraints imposed on them by the socioeconomic setting.

In the SPC-ILO study, the crucial feature of the socioeconomic setting that conditions migration is the establishment of external relations with an expanding capitalist system. These relations take the form of trade, aid, technology transfer, capital investment, educational and other cultural links, and so on. The overall effect of external contact is destabilizing. Traditional institutions are undermined or destroyed; primordial and sentimental ties are severed, thus setting individuals adrift to find their way in an atomistic world of rational calculus. The image is evocative of the impact of early European capitalism on feudalistic social relations. Accordingly, individuals find themselves in a situation in which migration becomes a rational choice, and the culture of consumerism conditions and justifies the decision to migrate.

As conceived by the IPS study, however, the setting of Polynesian migration consists of the extension of welfare-state colonialism into the postcolonial period. While agreeing that external factors play an important conditioning role, the IPS approach argues that the consequences of these factors are mostly benign; that is, the colonial powers established levels of welfare in the island states far beyond local productive capacity to reproduce and have consequently become obliged to maintain them. This model emphasizes social and cultural continuity, with traditional institutions undergoing transition to a neotraditional form rather than a com-

plete social transformation as envisaged by modernization theory and the SPC-ILO study. Migration arises from this setting primarily because the subsidies provided by means of budgetary and other forms of aid are limited by political factors and are therefore insufficient to support the entire population in the island community. A certain proportion of the population thus finds itself "situated" such that it has insufficient access to public subsidies (eg, through civil service employment). Private subsidies in the form of migrant remittances are therefore required to "top up" family income to maintain the desired level of welfare.

With respect to the proximate cause of population movement, we can contrast these positions by describing the first as committing the "fallacy of misplaced individualism," and the second, the "fallacy of misplaced familism." Truth probably lies somewhere between the two fallacies. While this paper does not intend to fully justify one or other of these positions, the weight of evidence and theory probably supports the view that the fallacy of misplaced individualism represents the greater error. The persistence of primary group ties and of ethnic and religious identity in the context of rapid social change belies the simplistic and artificial contrast between *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* social relations drawn by modernization theory (Graves and Graves 1980).

It does not necessarily follow that the harmonious, conflict-free familism envisioned by the IPS study is an accurate characterization of the spatially dispersed kinship networks set up by Polynesian migration. Falling between these two extremes is a view that envisages the relationship among individuals (and individual personality), kinship systems, and external socioeconomic setting as one of dynamic flexibility and tension. Centrifugal forces that tend to detach the individual from the group are counteracted in time by forces of reintegration. That Polynesian families and households engage in various migration strategies aimed at maintaining or improving standards of welfare in the islands (Underhill 1989) while simultaneously sustaining family solidarity does not mean that such efforts are completely successful. Individual migrants may resist allocation by the kinship system and attempt to "go it alone." As Kotchek's (1975) work among Samoans in the United States shows, however, such individualistic migrants can sometimes be found retreating back to the family during periods of socioeconomic or personal stress (where their acceptance is by no means guaranteed). And as Graves and Graves (1980) have pointed out, there are cases in which migration has strengthened kinship

ties. In summary, the image of an inexorable transition from traditional kinship solidarity to the impersonal relationships of mass society seen in modernization theory does not capture the dynamic reality of intrafamilial relations within migrant communities.

Whatever the actual nature of family relations under conditions of large-scale population movement, it is impossible to ignore kinship and community levels of social organization. As Goldscheider (1987) has recently argued, the study of third world migration patterns in the late twentieth century requires a new emphasis on communities, households, families, and ethnic groups as units of analysis.

The centrality of households and families in understanding the relationships between migration and social structure and the focus on cohorts, generations, and intergenerational transfers place the sociological analysis of migration in less developed nations at the core of demographic theory as well as within the major sociological intellectual traditions of Weber, Durkheim and Marx. (Goldscheider 1987, 692)

This perspective helps reveal the central weakness of the SPC-ILO approach—the absence of social organization in general, and the kinship group in particular, as an explanatory factor in Polynesian migration.

WHITHER DEPENDENCY?

As shown already, it is possible to detach the SPC-ILO model of migration from dependency, or *dependencia*, theory (in the Latin American sense) without completely undermining the overall argument, but this detachment remains incomplete if it is insisted that all external relations imply by their very nature contact with the capitalist system. Yet alongside the structural theory of dependency a second conception of dependency is being employed. Dependency in this second sense refers to loss of autonomy or self-reliance—a process considered problematic not only because of its consequences but also because autonomy is valued for its own sake. Dependency in this sense has been lamented by many social observers in the Pacific Islands (eg, Crocombe 1983, 165–176) without their necessarily subscribing to the *dependencia* thesis.

Remittance dependency is perceived as problematic because it denotes group reliance on external networks of social relations (in particular, labor markets) rather than on immediate kin and intercedes a cash nexus

between kin relations that were previously uncontaminated by monetary transactions. This is clearly an issue of some social importance that illustrates how social science and philosophy are still inevitably bound together. Although no sources are mentioned in the SPC-ILO reports, the inspiration for the view expressed there appears to be that of Marx. In his *Gundrisse* (1971), Marx contrasts the personal social relationships of feudalism based on use values with the impersonal relations fostered by capitalism and production for exchange. Although feudalistic relations were also ones of dependence, they reflected personal relationships, whereas in materialist, capitalist society people become dependent on autonomous social forces: "these material states of dependence, as opposed to the personal states, are also characterized by the fact that individuals are now controlled only by abstractions, whereas earlier they depended on one another" (Marx 1971, 73). Marx's conception of dependence is an aspect of the "alienation" of one person from another under capitalism.

Whatever the validity of the alienation concept as a criticism of capitalist social relations, however, in Polynesian societies, migration can be seen as one of the means by which the full penetration of capitalist institutions is resisted. In the first place, migrant remittances provide cash incomes and limit the need to restructure domestic society along capitalist lines to raise onshore productivity. Second, dependence on offshore labor markets is only partly impersonal: metropolitan jobs are often arranged through kinship networks, thus kinship ties mediate between impersonal labor markets and recipient families in the island pole. Dependence on remittances is in the first instance dependence on kin and therefore retains its personal character. It is arguable that this form of dependence is no worse than dependence on offshore primary produce commodity markets or tourism—both of which are unstable and involve greater contact with nonkin. Given a general atmosphere of uncertainty and instability in the regional and international economies, most Pacific Islanders would probably prefer to place their confidence in their kin—whether at home or abroad—than in totally impersonal markets.

IS A THEORETICAL SYNTHESIS POSSIBLE?

The policy synthesis called for in the terms of reference of the SPC-ILO study could only have been achieved through a prior theoretical synthesis.

Some of the difficulties of accomplishing such a synthesis will be evident from the preceding discussion. But some preliminary steps toward a synthesis can, and should, be taken.

As a first step, we can reduce the purely explanatory variables common to both studies to two "causal" variables and four "consequence" variables, as follows:

Causes

1. External system
(background conditions)
2. Internal cultural system
(proximate determinant)

Consequences

1. Economic growth
2. Social inequality
3. Culture change
4. Dependence

Regarding causes, the difference between the two approaches amounts to disparate readings of colonial history on the one hand and the contemporary impact of external political and socioeconomic forces on the other. It is unlikely that these differences can be resolved. The only common ground is that both approaches recognize that external forces are significant and may undermine traditional or neotraditional society. The extreme position of the SPC-ILO study that all external links are harmful and that island societies should aim for a virtually total "de-linkage" stands in the way of a synthesis. Some modification of this position is essential.

The second causal variable refers to the proximate cause of migration. Both positions agree that this can be found in the cultural system: on the one hand, individualism; on the other, familism. A synthesis of this apparent contradiction may be possible by recognizing that both processes are at work in an unsteady and dynamic equilibrium. The IPS position needs to acknowledge that not all migrants have been "allocated" by the family and that not all migration can be placed in the category of "labor" migration. Conversely, the SPC-ILO position requires modification in the other direction: kinship links in Polynesian societies remain strong and central to social organization, and there is no reason to exempt migration from the operations of the system. Resolution of this question requires further analysis of the existing literature and more field studies in the manner of Underhill's (1989) case study of Manihiki Atoll in the northern Cook Islands.

Of the four main "consequence" variables, the least contentious is economic growth. Both approaches acknowledge that the migration-remittance system can maintain growth providing a GNP measure is employed and not a GDP measure. There is some disagreement over whether economic growth constitutes development, with the SPC-ILO study taking the position that it does not. The IPS would probably agree but argue that development in the sense of expanded domestic production would carry unacceptable social costs.

The argument that the migration-remittance system increases social inequality was made by the SPC-ILO study, but not convincingly. The study acknowledged that at least some of the social processes involved in migration from Western Samoa improve the distribution of rewards. Clarification of the conditions under which inequality is increased or decreased is required here as well as an assessment of how much the distribution of income and wealth is changed by migration. The effects may be minor in either direction.

According to the SPC-ILO model, the migration-remittance system has had an independent impact on the culture system by producing individualism and undermining traditional authority. I have shown how this process was plausible independent of whether individualism or familism was the proximate cause of migration. Resolution of this problem requires a modification of the IPS position, which is unrealistically sanguine about the cultural consequences of migration. Migration sets up powerful forces that threaten the "organic unity" of Polynesian societies dispersed in space. A resolution of this contradiction requires that the central concept of "transnational corporations of kin" in the IPS framework be modified to reflect a much less tidy and institutionalized process. On the other hand, the pessimistic assessment of the SPC-ILO study regarding the decline of primary group solidarity with social change is subject to the same "ethnographic veto" as applies to much of modernization theory (Graves and Graves 1974).

A resolution of the contradictory approaches to the phenomenon of dependency appears difficult. I have argued that dependency theory in the Latin American sense is not the main problem here but rather a philosophical conception of dependency denoting a decline in the quality of social relations caused by the shift from a social system based on the production of "use values" to one based on material exchanges among kin. Taken at face value and putting aside the connection with Marx's specific theory of

alienation under capitalism, this can be seen as in part an empirical question. Does migration lead to a deterioration in intrafamilial relations caused by monetary transactions? Does the capitalist labor market have something to do with this? Do kinship ties effectively mediate between the neotraditional home society and the capitalist labor markets of the metropolitan centers? Indeed, are kinship relations any more conflict-ridden or stressful under these conditions than when migration was minimal? These questions call for further investigation.

The concept of dependency was also employed by SPC-ILO in the sense of loss of autonomy, using precolonial society as a comparative standard. The IPS study acknowledges the loss of autonomy implied in the MIRAB system but views this as a reasonable price to be paid to maintain a satisfactory level of living in the islands and in general as a manageable process. The SPC-ILO approach appears too structuralist here and unwilling to recognize the skill of Pacific Islanders in managing their external relations or the unreality of autarky as a means of raising living standards above subsistence levels. The use of precolonial society as the standard for autonomy is obviously problematic. On the one hand, traditional economic autonomy was largely focused at the lineage level, although exchange between lineages unequally endowed with land and sea resources occurred. On the other hand, there is nothing foreign about traditional interisland exchange networks in the Pacific. The best examples are in Melanesia (Malinowski 1961). Even in precontact times, the social and economic viability of some small islands in the Milne Bay area of Papua New Guinea was dependent upon interisland trade. The selection of colonially imposed national boundaries as the appropriate unit of autonomy in present times appears from this viewpoint to be somewhat arbitrary, although it is important to acknowledge that traditional exchange networks and modern trade represent different orders of magnitude.

These considerations weaken the SPC-ILO argument but do not destroy it. A resolution of this conundrum requires acceptance of the reality and positive contribution of selected external aid and trade relations. Are development and autonomy compatible goals? In any case, the emphasis here should be on selected external relations. Even the most dependent Polynesian territory of American Samoa has legislative control over social programs proposed by the US Department of Interior: they are frequently rejected as being inconsistent with Samoan culture.

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND SOCIAL POLICY REVISITED

As the preceding analysis has demonstrated, working backwards from two contrasting sets of social science conclusions and policy recommendations reveals the complex pathways that link conclusions to premises. In contrast to the empiricist or commonsense conception of science as dealing exclusively with the facts, there is a complex amalgam of competing attitudes, opinions, values, judgments, theories, hypotheses, and beliefs, as well as partly verified empirical generalizations. The objectivity of science has evaporated.

The point is that the studies under discussion are typical rather than atypical. They reflect the nature of the social sciences and are not necessarily special cases in need of correction. Certainly the model of "correction" offered by the value-free model of science (to purge social science of values) is not possible in any absolute sense. As discussed earlier, all explanatory models imply some "contrast space" that defines the boundaries within which it is legitimate to seek causal patterns. Unless specified by client governments, the setting of these boundaries will depend on the social, political, and cultural values of the researcher. Similarly, it is impossible to purge social science of theory, restricting discussion only to matters of established fact. What counts as a fact is in part determined by the theory employed to explain it. Competing metatheoretical models determine what procedures establish the "truth" of a proposition. Between theory and practice fall the shadows of ambiguity, argument, and discord. The politician seeking social science guidance on social policy receives more (and less) than was bargained for.¹⁸

The implication is not that social science is unable to make a contribution to policy formulation but that such contributions will be more effective if the nature and limitations of social science knowledge are openly acknowledged. This requires the explicit recognition of the role of values and theory in policy studies. In practical terms, this may take a relatively modest form, such as clearly specifying the (conscious) value presuppositions in technical reports or specifying the range of value orientations within which policy options might be formulated. Similarly, reports should acknowledge the range of alternative theoretical models and discuss the policy implications of each.

The repression of dialogue represents one means by which policy

research falls short of the objectivity that is actually possible and becomes ideological. This may take the form of the repression of theory either by attempts to restrict the agenda of project meetings to matters of fact or by making insufficient opportunities available for critical feedback on technical reports. The presentation of scientific findings to meetings of community representatives is one means of ensuring intersubjective verification of results and should be required—as should the employment and training of researchers from the subject population.¹⁹

These considerations bring into question the positivist conception of the relationship between theory and practice. The view that the role of social science is only to determine causal connections (means) while the selection of ends is the exclusive role of politicians is unrealistic. The “truth” value of a proposition to be used in a practical syllogism cannot be determined exclusively from inside the scientific community but requires intersubjective validation with the subject population—or at least representatives of it.

The fundamental prerequisite for any policy synthesis of scientific studies is unavoidably a theoretical synthesis or at least a coherent theoretical model. Such a synthesis cannot be produced by “adding up” research findings inductively but requires several forms of analysis. Metascientific analysis reveals underlying assumptions about scientific knowledge, conceptions of truth and verification, and the relationship between theory and practice; linguistic analysis allied with philosophical interpretation reveals embedded-value presuppositions both conscious and unconscious; logical analysis in the manner of analytical philosophy reveals the structure of arguments and detects fallacies or logical errors; empirical analysis focuses on the methodology of data collection and assigns weight to observational statements. This article has illustrated one method of achieving a theoretical synthesis at these various levels by means of the dialectical confrontation of two theoretical models.

CONCLUSION

The specific conclusions and recommendations of the SPC-ILO study concerning international migration from island Polynesia to countries on the Pacific rim were based on some extreme positions with regard to international relations, monetization, consumption patterns, productive and nonproductive activities, and the role of kinship in migration.²⁰ Some of

these positions were based on embedded value judgments, while others derived from the reading of the historical record and an indiscriminate selection of results from empirical studies. The countertheory proposed by the IPS also had weaknesses, in particular, a rather idealized conception of the modern Polynesian kinship system and an excessively sanguine view of the migration process; but overall it succeeds to a greater degree than its rival because it attempted the type of theory construction that policy analysis requires and made greater use of intersubjective verification through consultation with community leaders. Although each of these models does damage to the other, neither scores a complete knockout blow. Both studies reflect the self-image of their authors as persons sincerely interested in the welfare and viability of the societies in question; the social and cultural values underlying each model are defensible, but the resulting analysis is fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity—as social science results often are. Under such conditions, drastic alterations to social policy designed to affect the behavior of internationally mobile Polynesians should be approached with caution.

Notes

1 Exceptions were those islands subject to the “slave trade” with Peru in the 1860s (Maude 1983). The main demographic impact of culture contact on many islands in the nineteenth century was the great increase in the death rate caused by introduced diseases (see McArthur 1967).

2 French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna also experience considerable international movement, but this is mostly to and from New Caledonia (within the same citizenship area) rather than to a developed metropolitan country and will not be considered in this review.

3 Photojournalist Rick Sutter has located expatriate Samoans in forty-five countries around the globe, including such unlikely locations as Rome, Bhutan, and rural Kenya (Thompson 1988).

4 The countries analyzed in detail were the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau Islands, Kiribati, and Tuvalu. One chapter of the report, however, did point out the broad similarity of conditions in other Polynesian countries such as Western Samoa, American Samoa, and Tonga (Bertram and Watters 1984, 403–405).

5 The conclusions of the IPS study may be found in Bertram and Watters (1984). Further supporting argumentation may be found in Bertram and Watters (1985, 1986). The SPC-ILO project produced twenty-two “country reports” and a

summary report (Connell 1987). The specific country reports of relevance here are No. 1 (American Samoa), No. 2 (Cook Islands), No. 11 (Niue), No. 17 (Tokelau), No. 18 (Tonga), and No. 22 (Western Samoa). These are cited, respectively, as Connell (1983a), Connell (1983b), Connell (1983c), Connell (1983d), Connell (1983e), Connell (1983f).

6 Other writers of this school include Portes (1987), Amin (1974), and Castles and Kosack (1973). A number of researchers associated with the ILO adopt a similar perspective, eg, Bohning (1979) and Stahl (1979).

7 There are several varieties of dependency theory, each with different interpretations of the specific mechanisms by which one economy "underdevelops" or "conditions" another (see Chilcote 1974). The extreme view that the capitalist metropolitan country develops itself by systematically extracting economic surplus from the farthest reaches of the traditional economy can be found in Frank (1979). Other dependency approaches allow for the possibility that economic growth and development occur in spite of metropolitan domination, but this will take the form of dependent rather than autonomous capitalist development (eg, Cardoso 1982). World-system theory (Wallerstein 1974) is an extension of dependency theory, placing greater emphasis on trade relations compared with Frank's concern with capital accumulation. Both approaches share the view that a country's development or underdevelopment is determined by its dependent position in an international division of labor (Veltmeyer 1980).

8 The SPC-ILO argument logically requires that the act of migration cannot itself be taken as an indicator of individualism, otherwise the explanation is simply a tautology.

9 In Tonga, for example, real economic growth increased by an average of 5.3 percent during the four-year period 1980–1983 (Economist Intelligence Unit 1987). Migration was probably steady at a high rate during this period. Remittance receipts increased from 10.8 million *pa'anga* in fiscal 1980–81 to 18.5 million *pa'anga* in 1984–85 (Tonga Ministry of Finance 1985). In real terms, remittance income remained more or less constant during this period. Weiner (1987, 189–190) has shown that many third world countries experiencing high rates of net emigration have simultaneously achieved impressive rates of economic growth—sometimes exceeding those of the labor-importing country.

10 It is likely that some natural science concepts are also value-laden (Garfinkel 1981, 138).

11 Ironically, this view is also typical of neo-Malthusian approaches to population and development that consider only direct capital investment in production as contributing to development. Such views have been questioned in recent years (eg, National Research Council 1986).

12 Successful growers of export crops in the Cook Islands, for example, receive considerable social approval in spite of their association with agriculture. The emphasis is on success that requires rare skills.

13 The test of whether or not a hypothesis has been falsified is by no means simple and raises almost as many problems as the rival theory that hypotheses can be "verified" by the accumulation of tests. The superiority of the falsificationist model of hypothesis testing is that it resolves the inherent difficulties associated with induction because the inductive model is unable to specify how many tests are required to achieve certainty (see Popper 1959).

14 As the previous discussion implies, the weight to be given to any given test of a hypothesis is unavoidably a matter of judgment. This does not imply that it is solely subjective since the judgment must be justified and exposed to scrutiny; as Popper has argued (1959), the objectivity of the judgment ultimately lies only in its being exposed to the possibility of correction.

15 Loomis (1984). But supporting evidence from Samoa is available (see Macpherson 1981).

16 See Hayes and Levin (1984) for citations.

17 In the Tongan migrant communities in New Zealand or the United States, the arrival of a visiting family member from Tonga signals a demand for a gift of money to take back. Some visiting takes place solely for this purpose since the physical presence of a person is more difficult to ignore than a letter or a telephone call. The air fare (which may be borrowed) is an investment to be recouped, hopefully with interest.

18 As Davis (1987) has recently argued, the World Fertility Survey was probably the largest and most expensive (US\$40 million) survey ever conducted, but in its desire to avoid theoretical (ie, controversial) issues it failed to ask the most pertinent questions. The survey assumed that what policymakers required was more data when the real need was for clearer thinking. Much the same can be said for Pacific migration.

19 The United States Department of Labor project on the employment and training needs of Samoans in the United States (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory 1984) made effective use of community involvement.

20 The treatment of internal migration in the Melanesian countries contains similar biases (see Connell 1987), but discussion of these was beyond the scope of this article.

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